

Community Gardens Task Force

The purpose of the Community Gardens Task Force is to identify and develop ways to encourage state agencies, municipalities and private parties to establish and expand community gardens and the activities conducted by such gardens. We do this by convening stakeholders to study, evaluate and develop recommendations on how to encourage the expansion of community gardens in New York State.

The Task Force is chaired by the Commissioner (or designee) and meets biannually and as needed to perform its functions.

The Community Gardens Task Force may study, evaluate and provide recommendations with goals to:

1. Encourage the establishment and expansion of community gardens by state agencies, municipal governments, and private parties;
2. Encourage cooperation between the activities and operations of community gardens to local food assistance programs;
3. Increase the benefits that community gardens may provide to their local communities;
4. Encourage cooperation with community-based organizations to increase the opportunities for seniors, those aged sixty years of age or older, to participate in community gardens;
5. Encourage the expansion of the production of fresh fruits and vegetables in areas served by community gardens to help encourage healthier lifestyles and wellness, and to help reduce the incidence of adult and childhood obesity;
6. Develop after-school programs that establish, maintain, and expand community gardens; and
7. Encourage the development and expansion of community gardens in food deserts.
8. Or other goals as deemed appropriate.

The Task Force is required to prepare and submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature every five years on January 1, beginning in 2023. The report shall include:

- a. The number, nature and geographic location of community gardens;
- b. A description of the costs, benefits and impacts of community gardens
- c. An assessment of the successes, failures and barriers in developing, maintaining and expanding community gardens;
- d. Lists of funding sources available to develop and expand community gardens along with the requirements for obtaining the funding;
- e. An assessment of the funding, requirements and barriers for double the number of existing community gardens;
- f. A discussion of the goals of the task force and a description of the steps and projects undertaken to meet the goals;
- g. An action plan for doubling the number of community gardens in the state of New York;
- h. Recommendations for developing, maintaining and expanding community gardens in food deserts; and
- i. Any other recommendations or assessments the task force deems appropriate for the report.